

HIGHLIGHTING
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THE JAPANESE AND BAMBOO

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**THE JAPANESE AND
BAMBOO**



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ON THE COVER

A rickshaw on the Bamboo Forest Trail in Sagano, Kyoto City
Photo: Courtesy of EBISUYA Rickshaw

EDITORS' NOTE

Japanese names in this publication are written in Japanese order: family name first, personal name last.

JAPAN-INDONESIA SUMMIT MEETING AND WORKING LUNCH

On July 27, 2022, Mr. Kishida Fumio, Prime Minister of Japan, held a Japan-Indonesia Summit Meeting with H.E. Mr. Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia, who was visiting Japan. The overview of the meeting is as follows.

Introduction

Prime Minister Kishida welcomed President Joko's visit to Japan and expressed his gratitude for the President's words of condolences on the passing of former Prime Minister Abe Shinzo. In response, President Joko, while expressing his gratitude for Prime Minister Kishida's warm welcome, touched on former Prime Minister Abe's achievements and offered his sincere condolences.

Prime Minister Kishida expressed his desire to promote cooperation toward a new development of the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" in conjunction with the "ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific." President Joko expressed his intention to continue to strengthen cooperation in close collaboration with Japan.

The two leaders confirmed that they will strengthen cooperation toward next year, which marks the 65th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations between Japan and Indonesia and the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation.

Bilateral relations

Prime Minister Kishida conveyed that Japan plans to further support the improvement of maritime security and safety capabilities, including through the ongoing research for the provision of a patrol vessel. The two leaders confirmed that they would

promote cooperation in the area of maritime security and safety and welcomed the signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation on the maritime security and safety.

The two leaders welcomed the first-ever participation by the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) in "the Garuda Shield" multi-national joint exercise to be held in Indonesia next month, and confirmed that they would further strengthen security cooperation including defense exchanges.

Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan would continue to cooperate in the construction of the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) system in Jakarta and the development of Patimban Port. In response, President Joko expressed his gratitude for Japan's support and his desire to further promote cooperation in the infrastructure sector.

Prime Minister Kishida conveyed Japan's policy of providing a yen loan to support Indonesia's efforts in the area of disaster prevention, and President Joko expressed his gratitude.

In the energy sector, Prime Minister Kishida conveyed Japan's intention to provide a yen loan for the completion of the Peusangan Hydroelectric Power Plant, and President Joko expressed his gratitude. The two leaders also confirmed that they would promote cooperation in the energy sector and climate change, including collaboration toward the realization of an "Asia Zero Emissions Community" vision and through the "Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP)".

President Joko conveyed that all import restrictions on Japanese food products had been lifted. Prime Minister Kishida expressed his appreciation for President Joko's leadership to make such a decision as it will encourage the people of the disaster-affected areas.

In addition, Prime Minister Kishida expressed his desire to strengthen cooperation and investments in the automotive, food, start-up and other sectors, as well as cooperation in the environment sector, and President Joko expressed his support and stated that he would promote cooperation in a wide range of areas.



Japan-Indonesia Summit Meeting

Cooperation in the region and in the international arena

Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan would continue to support Indonesia, as the G20 chair for a successful G20 Bali Summit, and President Joko Widodo expressed his gratitude. The two leaders confirmed that they would keep working closely together.

The two leaders also exchanged views on the situation in Ukraine and shared the view that every country must abide by international law and that the sovereignty and territorial integrity must be respected, anywhere in the world.

Prime Minister Kishida expressed opposition to unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or economic coercion in the East and South China Seas. The two leaders confirmed the importance of abiding by the international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Moreover, the two leaders also exchanged views regarding economic coercion and cyber cooperation.

The two leaders confirmed their continued cooperation in dealing with North Korea, including on the nuclear and missile issues and the abductions issue, as well as their cooperation in responding to regional issues and those in the international community, such as the situation in Myanmar, disarmament and non-proliferation including cooperation in the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference and strengthening the functions of the United Nations as a whole, including Security Council reform.

Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan would contribute by dispatching a delegation of instructors to a PKO training session offered by the United Nations for the first time in Indonesia, and President Joko Widodo expressed words of welcome.



Japan-Indonesia Summit Meeting

Photos: Courtesy of Cabinet Public Affairs Office

Note: This article was created with the consent of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and on the basis of materials published by the Ministry.

A Sendai City shopping arcade during the Tanabata Festival
Photo: Courtesy of Sendai Tanabata Festival Support Association



Chikurin-no-Komichi in Kyoto. The “Path of bamboo” is lined with *hogaki* bamboo fences
Photo: s_fukumura/photolibary



The Japanese and Bamboo



Some of the range of bamboo shoot dishes that feature in Kinsuitei’s full course menu
Photo: Courtesy of Kinsuitei



A restaurant ceiling fitted with *Kyo-meichiku* split bamboo
Photo: Courtesy of Yokoyama Bamboo Products & Co.

I

n this month's issue of *Highlighting Japan*, we take a look at the role of bamboo in Japanese culture and everyday life. The issue opens with an interview with Shibata Shozo, a professor at Kyoto University and Chief Director of the Japan Bamboo Society, about the characteristics of Japanese bamboo and its many different uses. We visit a famous bamboo forest in Kyoto. We meet a manufacturer of traditional bamboo crafts and two bamboo artists, a *shakuhachi* (bamboo flute) player, and the owner of a restaurant that serves fine bamboo shoot cuisine. We introduce the colorful Sendai Tanabata Festival, where bamboo has long played a central role. And in the realm of science, we look at the role bamboo played in the commercialization of the first incandescent light bulb, and at how bamboo forests are being managed to provide the raw material for smooth and supple bamboo paper.



The Characteristics and Many Uses of Japanese Bamboo



Shibata Shozo, a professor at Kyoto University
Photo: Sawaji Osamu

WE spoke with Shibata Shozo, a professor at Kyoto University and Chief Director of the Japan Bamboo Society, about the characteristics of Japanese bamboo and its many different uses.

How many species of bamboo grow in Japan, and what are their characteristics?

It is estimated that there are more than 1,200 species of bamboo worldwide, of which around 250 grow in Japan. The species found in Japan are divided into two main types: *sasa* and bamboo (*take* in Japanese). The two species can be roughly distinguished by their height and the culm sheath (protective covering) on the stem, known as a culm. *Sasa* grows to a height of 0.5 to 4 meters and its culm sheath remains on the culm while growing. On the other hand, bamboo can reach nearly 20 meters in height and its culm sheath falls off as it grows.

The most common varieties of bamboo in Japan are *mosochiku*, *madake* and *hachiku*. *Mosochiku* was introduced from China around five hundred years ago. Many of the bamboo shoots that are known as the taste of spring (see pp. 18-19) are *mosochiku*. *Madake* and *hachiku* are believed to have been native to Japan since prehistoric times and have been used in many different applications since long ago, including utensils, ornaments, and for constructing buildings.

A characteristic feature of bamboo is that the culm is divided into nodes, and the spaces between the nodes are hollow. Also, the bamboo shoot has a rapid growth rate, with some records showing around 120 centimeters of growth in a single day. Another characteristic is its subterranean stem called a rhizome, which extends underground like a root. Rhizomes grow horizontally below the surface of the soil at a depth of tens of centimeters. Every year, bamboo shoots emerge from the underground rhizomes and then grow to form new culms. Although a Japanese bamboo forest appears to consist of individual bamboo culms, many have grown from the same rhizome.

About when did Japanese people first start using bamboo?

It is not exactly clear, but its use is thought to date back at least to the late Jomon period (around 2,900 to 3,200 years ago), since *rantai shikki* baskets¹ made of woven *sasa* and coated with lacquer have been excavated from Jomon ruins.

There is evidence in early Japanese chronicles that points to a connection between Japanese people and bamboo. The *Kojiki*, compiled in the early 8th century, tells of a myth that the deity Izanagi no Mikoto broke off and threw a tooth of an ornamental bamboo comb he was wearing, which turned into an edible bamboo shoot. This shows that bamboo was already being used as a fashion accessory and consumed as a food by this time.

Other evidence from historical sources is found in the oldest folk tale in Japan, *Taketori Monogatari* (The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter), believed to have been written in the early Heian period (late 8th to late 12th century). The tale



The culm sheath (protective covering for the culm, or stem, of bamboo) falls off as the plant grows.
Photo: cha-u / PIXTA

is about a young lady named Kaguya-hime who was discovered inside a bamboo culm. At the beginning of the story, we learn that an old bamboo cutter called Taketori no Okina who discovers Kaguya-hime “gathers bamboo from the mountains and fields and makes different things from it.” This suggests that during the Heian period people gathered bamboo from the mountains and fields and used it in their daily lives.

How have Japanese people used bamboo?

Japanese people have used bamboo for many different purposes. Bamboo is evergreen so both its culms and leaves remain green even in winter. People therefore associated bamboo with a sense of permanence and came to regard it as a sacred plant. Because of this, bamboo is used for decorations at annual festivals and ceremonial rituals. The most familiar example is the *kadomatsu* (gate pine). The *kadomatsu* is a New Year’s decoration made mostly of bamboo and pine, another evergreen tree, that is placed at the gates and entrances of homes and other buildings at this time of year. It is displayed to guide the deities who are said to visit each home on the first day of the new year.

Another way that bamboo is used is in the ritual of *jichin-sai*, or ground-breaking ceremony, commonly performed at construction sites before building work begins to offer prayers to the guardian deities of the land for the safe completion of the work. At that time, an altar is erected within a square enclosure demarcated by four bamboo poles with leaves. The meaning of this is to use sacred bamboo to create a sanctuary into which the deities are invited.

Bamboo is lightweight, easy to cut, very flexible, and doesn’t break easily when bent. By taking advantage of these characteristics many items are

made from bamboo. For example, in the past bamboo was used to make weapons such as bows and arrows. Even now we can see bamboo used for daily necessities such as baskets, colanders, brooms, umbrellas and chopsticks, as well as fishing rods and other fishing tackle, and as a construction material for houses. Besides, bamboo leaves and the sheath of the culms have antibacterial properties and are sometimes used to wrap foods such as *onigiri* (rice balls) and *dango* (dumplings).

One of the Japanese cultural traditions most closely associated with bamboo is the tea ceremony. Here, bamboo is used for everything from the construction of tea rooms to tea utensils. A bamboo utensil that I consider unique is tea whisk⁴¹ used to mix the hot water and matcha in the tea bowl. Tea whisks are made by splitting madake or hachiku into slender prongs. This innovative design is made possible only by bamboo.

How have bamboo forests been utilized in Japan?

Bamboo’s spreading rhizome system anchors the soil, helping to prevent damage from natural disaster. Before the spread of civil engineering technology from the West during the Meiji period (1868-1912), bamboo was planted along reservoir embankments and riverbanks. Also, being less prone to ground collapse due to their rhizomes, bamboo forests have long been said throughout Japan to be a safe place to take shelter during an earthquake.

Thus, as well as the application of bamboo as a material, bamboo forests themselves served a very useful purpose. That is why bamboo forests were located close to human settlements. However, the 1960s onward have seen the demand for bamboo decline due to factors such as the widespread use of plastic products. And urbanization has led to an increase in the number of bamboo forests that have fallen into disuse.

It is important that bamboo is cut down regularly to ensure that forests do not become overgrown. The way I describe the ideal density of bamboo is that it should be enough to allow a person holding an umbrella to walk through without the umbrella coming in contact with the bamboo. This level of density enables sufficient sunlight to penetrate the forest for the bamboo to thrive, producing forests that are a source of tasty bamboo shoots as well as craft and building materials. The young rhizomes also spread properly, enhancing disaster prevention function.

Amid growing public attention to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and plastic waste, bamboo has been gaining prominence as a sustainable resource in recent years. Local governments and NPOs are working with residents to manage and utilize neglected bamboo forests,



Kadomatsu (gate pine), a popular New Year’s decoration made mostly of pine and bamboo
Photo: tshutter / PIXTA

while companies are developing new effective ways to use bamboo.

What are some of the non-traditional ways in which bamboo is being used today?

Many different companies are using bamboo powder, fiber, or extract in their products. For instance, due to bamboo's rich fiber content, its powder is added to foods such as pasta and bread. Bamboo fiber is also used to make towels that are highly absorbent, odor-resistant, and soft to the touch. And bamboo vinegar extracted by allowing the steam and smoke produced when making bamboo charcoal to cool is used as an insect repellent for agricultural crops and as a cleaning agent.

A cutting-edge material made from bamboo is cellulose nanofiber (CNF)ⁱⁱⁱ. CNF is a fiber manufactured from cellulose, a major component of plants, which has been micro-refined to the nano level (one nanometer equals a billionth of a meter). CNF is lightweight and strong, and is resistant to warping when exposed to heat. Research and development efforts are currently underway to manufacture CNF from bamboo for utilization in applications such as buildings and satellite components.

Bamboo is an excellent material. As more people become aware of the superior benefits of bamboo, new applications will likely be developed.

Once the spread of COVID-19 subsides, what kind of Japanese bamboo would you like visitors from overseas to see in Japan?

One place that I would really like them to see is the Arashiyama bamboo forest in Kyoto (see pp. 10-11). Well-managed bamboo forests offer stunning scenery. Most species of bamboo grow in the tropics and subtropics, with just a few

species able to survive in colder climates. These can only be found in Japan and elsewhere in East Asia and in mountainous areas such as the Himalayas and the Andes. Many people overseas think of bamboo as a plant that grows in hot climates, so when they visit Japan, the sight of a winter landscape featuring green bamboo forest against white snow will surely make a strong impact.

I also think it would be fun for visitors to try their hand at making bamboo crafts. One of the most well-known places for bamboo crafts in Japan is Beppu City, Oita Prefecture^{iv}. Here, there are schools that teach bamboo crafts as well as workshops where participants can try their hand at crafting items from bamboo.

Once, *taketombo* (bamboo dragonfly, also known as a bamboo-copter), a traditional Japanese bamboo toy, were handed out at an international conference on bamboo held overseas. A *taketombo* is a piece of bamboo carved in the shape of a propeller with a thin shaft attached. To fly it, the shaft is placed between the palms of both hands and the palms rubbed together to rotate the blades as the shaft is released with an upward throwing motion. The *taketombo* was a big hit with the conference participants, who became quite absorbed in making it fly.

I would like to continue disseminating information in Japan and overseas about the multi-faceted appeal and potential of bamboo. 🍵

Interview by SAWAJI OSAMU

- i See *Highlighting Japan* May 2022, "Red Lacquerware from the Jomon Period" https://www.gov-online.go.jp/eng/publicity/book/hlj/html/202205/202205_04_en.html
- ii See *Highlighting Japan* July 2016, "The Way of Whisks" https://www.gov-online.go.jp/eng/publicity/book/hlj/html/201607/201607_12_en.html
- iii See *Highlighting Japan* September 2016, "Knock on Wood" https://www.gov-online.go.jp/eng/publicity/book/hlj/html/201609/201609_09_en.html
- iv See *Highlighting Japan* October 2016, "The Old Bamboo" https://www.gov-online.go.jp/eng/publicity/book/hlj/html/201610/201610_12_en.html



Sasa-dango dumplings wrapped in sasa bamboo leaves
Photo: zunda500 / PIXTA



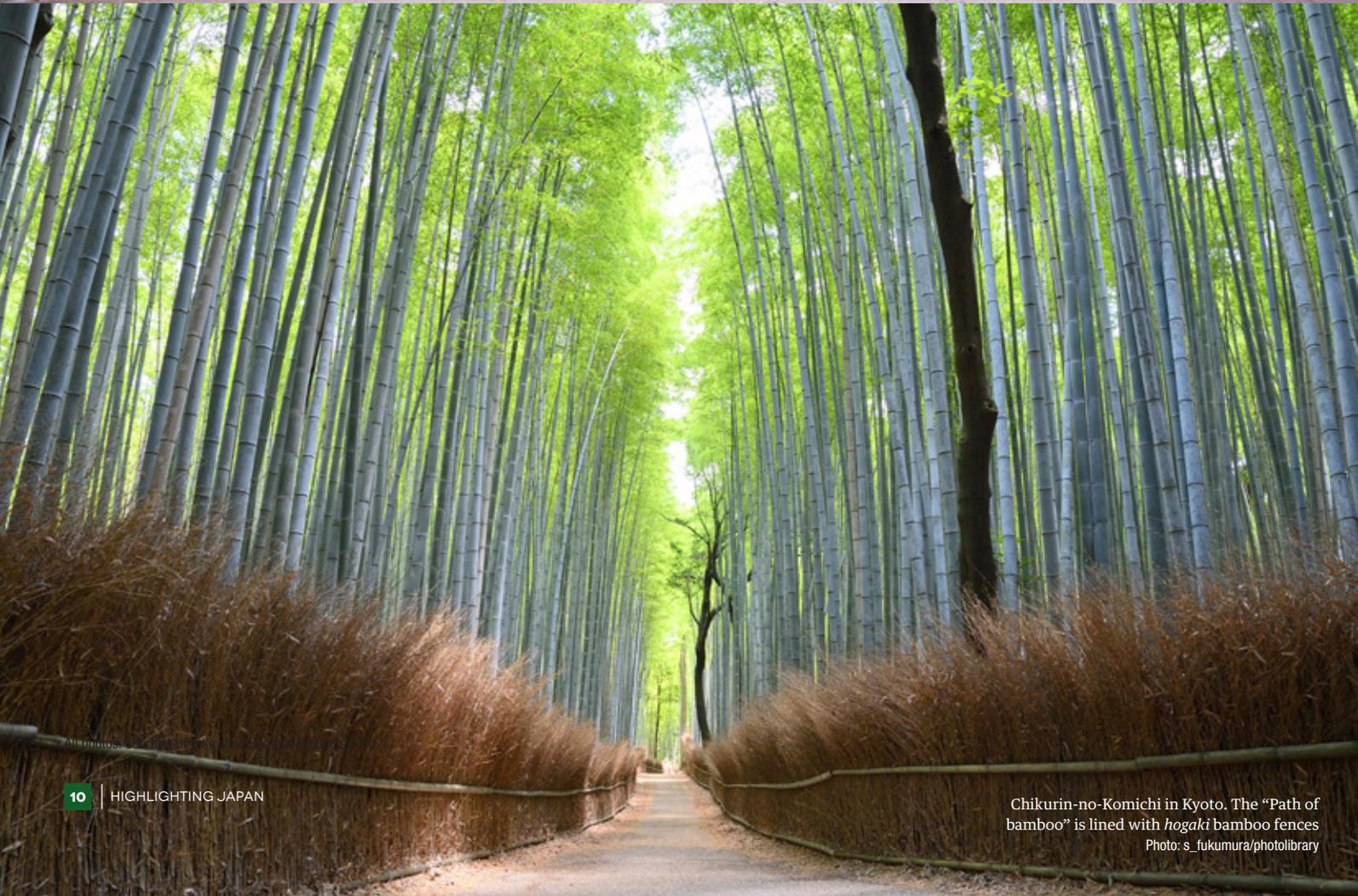
Hot water and matcha tea are mixed in a tea bowl using a bamboo tea whisk in the tea ceremony
Photo: june. / PIXTA



To fly a *taketombo* (bamboo dragonfly), the shaft of the propeller is placed between the palms of both hands and the palms are rubbed together to rotate the blades as the shaft is released with an upward throwing motion.
Photo: AK / PIXTA

A rickshaw on the Bamboo Forest Trail
Photo: Courtesy of EBISUYA Rickshaw

Two Paths through the Bamboo in Sagano, Kyoto





Towering bamboo along the Chikurin-no-Komichi, or “Path of bamboo”
Photo: korekore/photolibrary

Visitors enjoy a rickshaw ride on the Bamboo Forest Trail
Photo: Courtesy of EBISUYA Rickshaw

Saganoⁱ, in the western part of Kyoto City, is famous for its bamboo forest and the path through it, the Chikurin-no-Komichi, or “Path of bamboo.” In 2015, another spot, called the “Bamboo Forest Trail,” opened nearby, where visitors can also enjoy the beauty of bamboo.

FUJITA MAO

LOCATED in the western part of Kyoto City, the Sagano area is known for its beautiful bamboo forest, popularly known as the Arashiyama Bamboo Grove. The forest is about a 10-minute walk from JR Saga-Arashiyama Station, which is a 17-minute train ride from JR Kyoto Station. In the forest, there is a 400-meter path from Nonomiya Shrine in the middle of the forest through the north gate of Tenryu-ji Temple that leads to the beautiful Okochi Sanso villa. Called the Chikurin-no-Komichi, or “Path of bamboo,” it is one of Kyoto’s most popular sightseeing spots.

Recently, another area extending north from the Nonomiya Shrine, close to Tenryu-ji Temple, has been created for visitors to enjoy the bamboo. Called the “Bamboo Forest Trail,” this area covering some 3,800 square meters is a lush bamboo forest cut through with a broad, winding trail, offering a more leisurely experience than Chikurin-no-Komichi.

Both paths are extraordinary places where the sun shines through a ceiling of bamboo branches and where visitors are enveloped in the sounds of the wind and rustling leaves. On the Bamboo Forest Trail, visitors have the opportunity to take a guided rickshaw tour.

Kato Seiichi at the Kyoto Arashiyama Office of Ebisuya which operates the rickshaws explains, “We receive comments from customers slowly touring the bamboo forest in rickshaws such as, ‘I felt healed by the sound of bamboo leaves swaying in the wind and the smell of the bamboo’ and ‘The wind blowing through the bamboo groves is so pleasant.’ In fact, not only the customers, but also we rickshaw drivers enjoy the feeling of having our senses sharpened as we pass through the bamboo forests.”

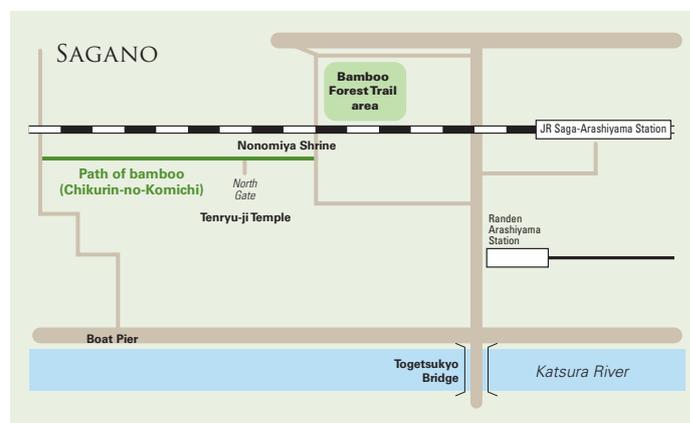
Ebisuya was founded in Arashiyama in 1992 and guides people by rickshaw from the Arashiyama Togetsukyo Bridge and around the bamboo groves of Sagano. Now the company is developing services in tourist spots all over the country and

these have become so popular that reservations can be made online and in several languages. However, guiding visitors through the small paths in the bamboo forest was not easy using rickshaws because there are so many slopes and narrow sections.

Therefore, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of its founding in 2012, Ebisuya decided to develop a large bamboo forest adjacent to the Chikurin-no-Komichi that could be enjoyed at a leisurely pace in a rickshaw. Drawing on expert advice, employees thinned out the bamboo and cut the grass, eventually completing the Bamboo Forest Trail in the fall of 2015. The company and Kyoto City have since entered into a free-of-charge management agreement for daily maintenance and management of the trail.

Kato comments, “At the Bamboo Forest Trail, *madake* (Japanese timber bamboo, *Phyllostachys bambusoides*) grows. We created a course through the plants that could be navigated both by rickshaw and on foot. In order to make people feel close to the bamboo and other visitors on the path, we decided not to put up *hogaki* (fences made of bamboo branches) such as those used at Chikurin-no-Komichi. As a result of this, many people now take a break or slowly take pictures on the trail, enjoying the bamboo to their heart’s content.”

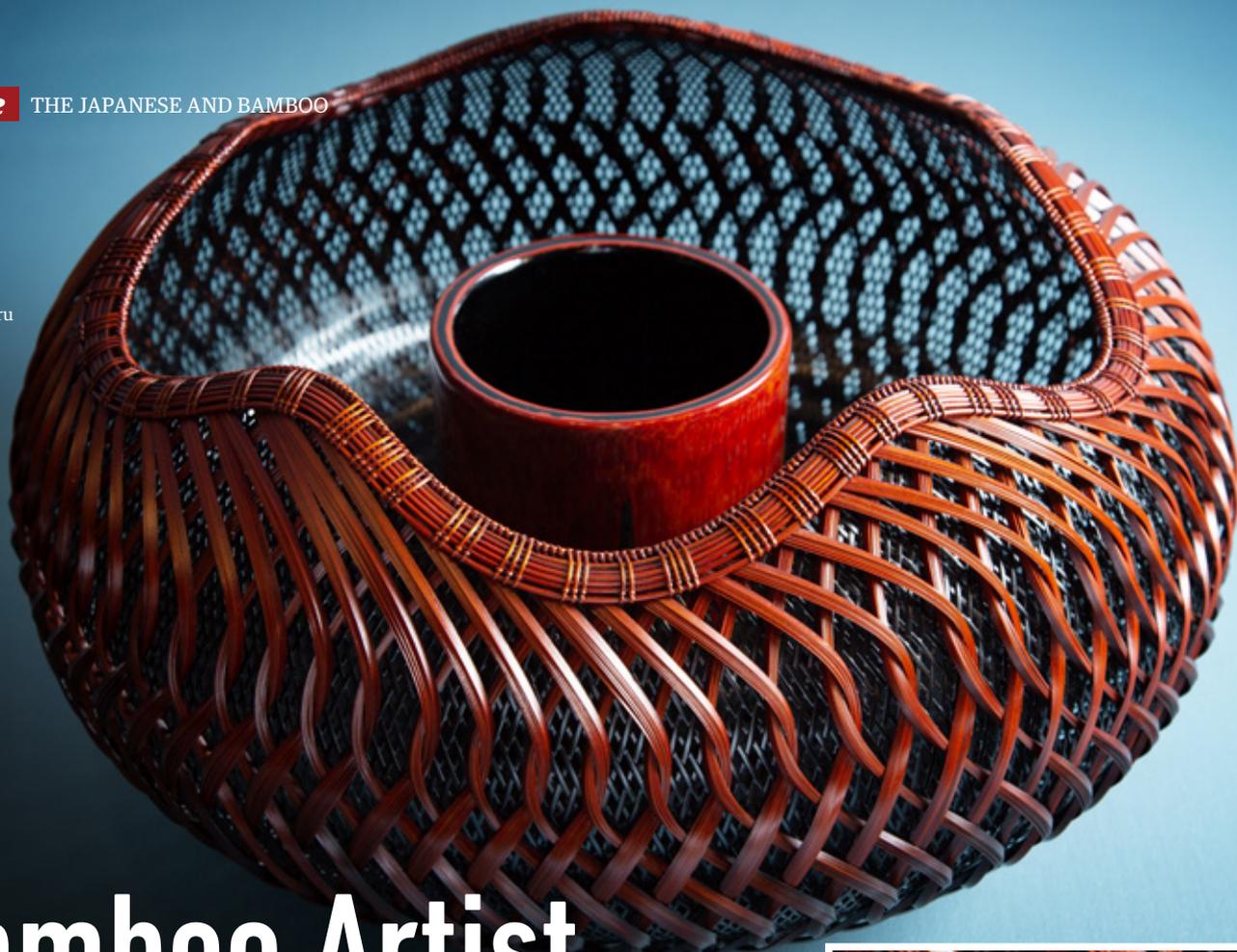
Sagano’s lush bamboo forests bring coolness in summer while their green stalks contrast beautifully with the snow in the winter. Throughout the year, the bamboo continues to give visitors different impressions of Kyoto. 7



Map showing the Chikurin-no-Komichi, or “Path of bamboo” (left) and Bamboo Forest Trail (upper center)

ⁱ A place name in Ukyo Ward, Kyoto, Kyoto Prefecture, Japan. A large area surrounded by Uzumasa and Utano to the west, the Katsura River to the north, Ogurayama to the east, and the base of Mt. Atago to the south.

A flower basket made using the *tabaneami* technique by Fujinuma Noboru (48 cm x 26 cm)



Bamboo Artist Fujinuma Noboru

Fujinuma Noboru creates works of art by skillfully making use of the simplicity of bamboo, and his works are highly esteemed both within Japan and internationally.

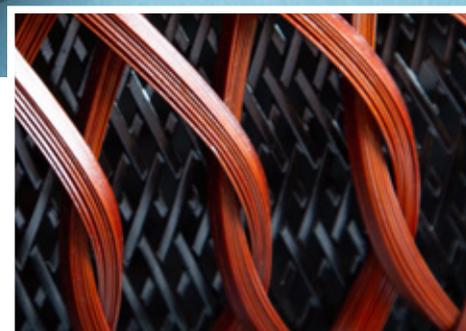
FUJITA MAO

BAMBOOWORKING is the traditional art of making items from bamboo, typically by weaving split and shaved rodlike bamboo strands (*takehigo*) to create objects with gentle curves and sharp, straight lines. Bambooworking is used to make a variety of utensils for everyday life such as trays, baskets and bowls, as well as serving ware used in the tea ceremony, vases for flower arrangement and decorative interior design items for modern life. The many items produced through bambooworking are highly esteemed both within Japan and abroad as folk crafts and as art.

Otawara City, Tochigi Prefecture is home to quality bamboo and has produced numerous excellent bamboo

artists. Fujinuma Noboru, a leading bamboo artist of modern Japan, was born here in 1945 and has been designated by the Japanese government as a holder of Important Intangible Cultural Property, also known as a Living National Treasure.

Fujinuma started on the path of bambooworking after he went abroad for the first time at age 27. During this trip to Paris, France, he encountered local people valuing and taking pride in their culture of stone, as represented by the Champs-Élysées, the Arc de Triomphe, the Louvre Museum, and other heritage from the Napoleonic era. The idea that Japan also has a wonderful culture swelled up inside Fujinuma, but he didn't have the means to express it at that time.



Close-up of the above work showing the novel twist conceived by Fujinuma

After returning to Japan, he began to study traditional Japanese culture and took a variety of traditional art lessons, including calligraphy, woodblock printing, and bambooworking. One day, an employee at a favorite bookstore showed Fujinuma a book. It was a collection of the works of Shono Shounsai (1904-1974), who had been designated as a holder of Important Intangible Cultural Property in 1967.

Fujinuma says, "When I looked at the book, I was shocked at the bambooworking, works of 'art' made from bamboo and by human hands. From there, I became an apprentice to a master bamboo artist and began to really study the techniques. I was quite skillful with my



A wicker presentation basket by Fujinuma Noboru (42 cm x 18 cm)



Fujinuma in his workshop with his locally harvested bamboo



Creating bamboo strands (*takehigo*) by splitting the bamboo



A flower basket by Fujinuma Noboru (72 cm x 46 cm)



Fujinuma at work on a bamboo basket

hands, so I was able to learn everything in about a year, and since then, I have continued to study on my own while looking at photos from that collection of his works.”

Strong inspiration and motivation are essential for self-study. For Fujinuma, the powerful vitality of bamboo in particular, with its stems that can grow 60 to 70 cm in a day, became the inspiration and motivation to create his works.

Fujinuma creates using five different types of Otawara-grown bamboo, each for a specific purpose. His works are varied, with some that are simple with a delicate and warm feel, some that are supple and elegant, and still some that are full of virile strength. All of these utilize

the bamboo material to the fullest.

“One day in 1992, by chance I twisted the bundle of bamboo strands when making something using the traditional *tabaneami* technique¹ and noticed the unexpected results. I decided to try and apply this to my work by making this twist a part of my own original technique.”

Since then, Fujinuma has been acutely aware of the strength that characterizes bamboo’s vitality, as well as the delicate nature of the material, and has come to make the parallel expression of these contradictory elements a creative theme in his works.

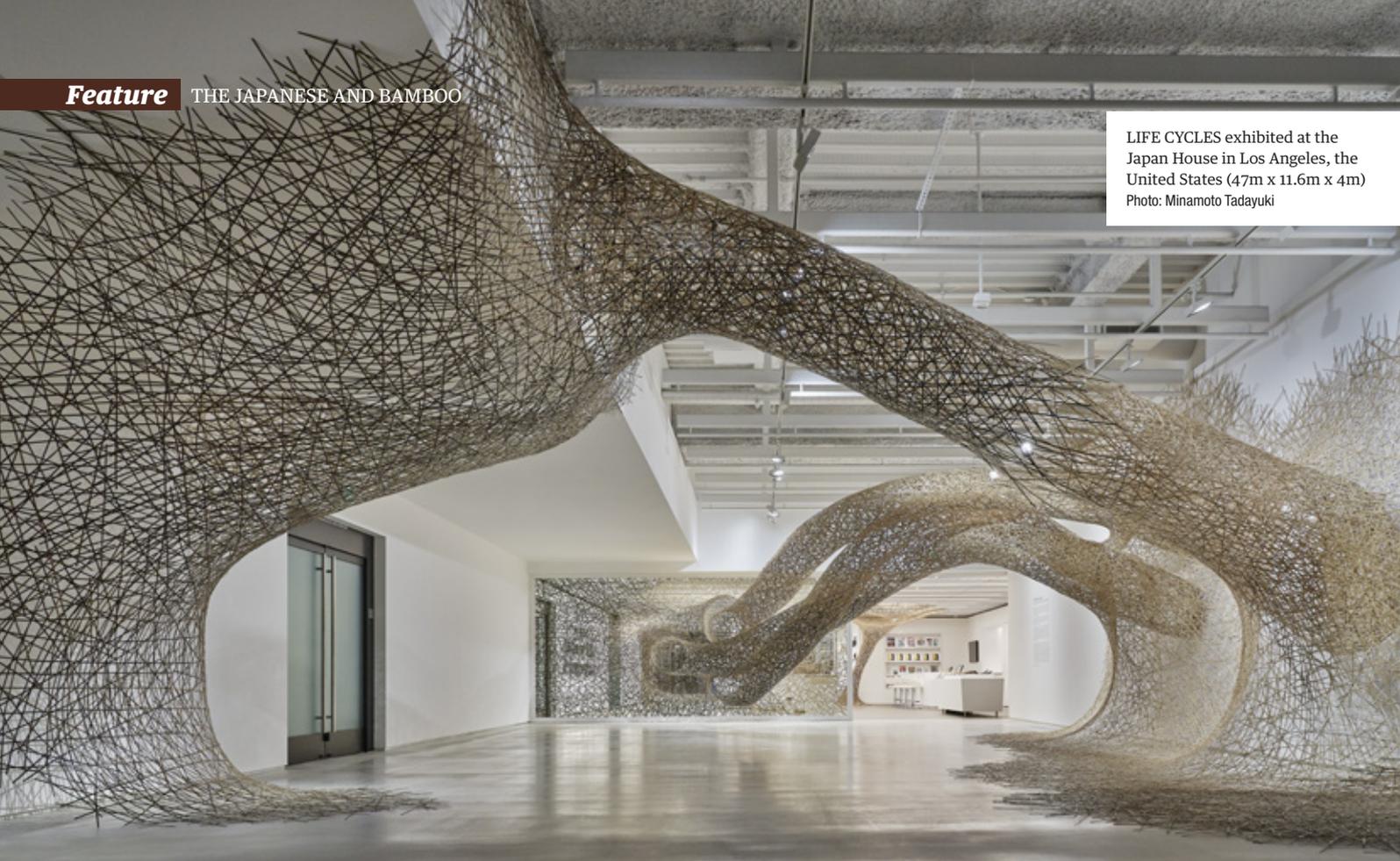
His works are highly esteemed both in Japan and abroad, with the majority

having been exhibited overseas. Fujinuma’s works have been added to the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Art Institute of Chicago in the United States, and the British Museum in the United Kingdom.

Having a thorough understanding of the properties of bamboo, Fujinuma creates works of art by carefully selecting wild-growing bamboo in Otawara. These works, made using the traditional material that is bamboo, are well suited to modern living spaces and possess the power to appeal to people around the world. **7**

¹ A method for creating shapes by bundling and weaving several hundred thin bamboo strands together.

LIFE CYCLES exhibited at the Japan House in Los Angeles, the United States (47m x 11.6m x 4m)
Photo: Minamoto Tadayuki



A Craftsman Who Creates Huge Installations with Bamboo

Bamboo craftsman Tanabe Chikuunsai IV creates huge contemporary art works using bamboo both in Japan and abroad, conveying the wonder of bamboo and exploring new possibilities for the material.

SAWAJI OSAMU



“LIFE CYCLES | A Bamboo Exploration with Tanabe Chikuunsai IV,” an exhibition about the bamboo craftsman Tanabe Chikuunsai IV, is being held at Japan House¹ in Los Angeles, the United States, from July 28, 2022 to January 15, 2023. In addition to delicate crafts using bamboo, Tanabe and his four apprentices spent about three weeks at the venue for the display of a huge installation called “LIFE CYCLES” that they completed by hand. It is a structure

Close-up of the *kikko ami* (turtle shell knitting) technique used for LIFE CYCLES
Photo: Minamoto Tadayuki



Tanabe Chikuunsai IV
Photo: Minamoto Tadayuki

consisting of about 11,000 bamboo strips, 47 meters in length, extending from wall to wall while twisting like a tornado. It overwhelms the viewer through its abundant dynamism and energy.

“I make the installation by sharing what I feel there and then with my



High Sail: Boat-shaped flower basket (60.5cm x 26.5cm x 28cm)

Photo: Minamoto Tadayuki

apprentices, and in doing so, it becomes a ‘living’ work of art,” says Tanabe. “I’ve made about fifty of them in Japan and overseas, but I feel that this one is the most complete.”

Tanabe is the fourth generation of a line of bamboo craftsmen who have been working in Sakai City, Osaka Prefecture for about 120 years. After graduating from the Department of Sculpture, Faculty of Fine Arts, Tokyo University of the Arts, he studied bamboo craft techniques for two years at the Oita Prefectural Bamboo Craft Training Center in Beppu City, Oita Prefecture. Later, he further improved his skills under his father, Tanabe Chikuunsai III.

Having become a bamboo craftsman, Tanabe has made use of techniques that have been handed down from generation to generation, such as *kikko ami* (turtle shell knitting) with its hexagon meshes, while also producing bamboo crafts and artworks with contemporary designs. His work gradually came to attract attention overseas as well, and work by him exhibited at the Philadelphia Museum of Art Craft Show in the United States was purchased by the museum and made part of its collection in 2001. Since then, there have been exhibitions at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the British Museum in the United Kingdom, with works increasingly being purchased by overseas museums and art collectors.

As he expanded his activities both in Japan and abroad, Tanabe began working on installations. Since exhibiting his

first work at an art museum in Osaka in 2012, he has been producing works in the United States, France, Brazil, Turkey and other countries.

“Bamboo is a material that has suppleness and purity as well as strength. I thought that by creating large-scale contemporary artworks, I would be able to convey the wonder of bamboo to more people,” explains Tanabe. “The good news is that many people of all nationalities and ages enjoy my installations. At Japan House, the production process was open to the public, and there were even elementary school students watching us very intently.”

Tanabe reuses bamboo strips from dismantling his work after an exhibition to make his next work. Works knitted with turtle shell knitting are very sturdy, but since no adhesive is used, they can easily fall apart. Every time he produces a work, about 10% of the bamboo strips deteriorate and break, so he adds new ones every time that happens.

“It is sustainable art that can only be made from natural materials,” says Tanabe. “When we dismantle this work at Japan House in January 2023, we plan to have locals help us out. Bamboo strips unraveled by Americans will be used to make a work in the next country, which

is then unraveled by people in that country. Being able to make these kinds of connections is also part of the appeal of this installation.”

Tanabe’s work is also imbued with a strong desire to preserve Japanese bamboo-related industries and traditions. Currently, demand for Japanese bamboo is shrinking, and the people engaged in the maintenance of bamboo forests are aging more and more. Through his work, Tanabe has sought to stimulate demand for bamboo, create employment opportunities, and otherwise support sustainable conservation and utilization of bamboo forests. Moreover, through his production of installations, he is trying to pass on bamboo craft techniques to his apprentices and the next generation.

“Right now, the maximum height of my work is about 12 meters, but in the future, we will use new techniques and work with more people to create larger works that exceed 20 meters in height,” says Tanabe.

By creating innovative works and also preserving bamboo craft traditions, Tanabe is exploring new possibilities for bamboo. 

ⁱ See *Highlighting Japan* June 2018, “Japan’s New High-Profile Cultural Outposts” https://www.gov-online.go.jp/eng/publicity/book/hlj/html/201806/201806_09_en.html



CONNECTION-GODAI exhibited at Odunpazari Modern Art Museum, Eskişehir, Turkey (8m x 5m x 8m)

Photo: Minamoto Tadayuki

A bamboo fence installed at the Katsura Imperial Villa by Yokoyama Bamboo Products & Co

PRESERVING THE TRADITIONS OF KYOTO'S BAMBOO

In the historic city of Kyoto, bamboo has long been used as a construction material and for decorative purposes. One shop in Kyoto that specializes in manufacturing bamboo products and materials is also known for its development of new products while preserving traditional bamboo craft techniques.

KATO KYOKO

BAMBOO has long been used in Japan for everyday utensils, farming implements, construction materials and more. Kyoto, the nation's capital for more than a millennium from the latter half of the 8th century, is the Japanese city with perhaps the deepest connection with bamboo. Bamboo has supported not only the lives of the people of Kyoto, but also their culture. For example, many Buddhist temples in Kyoto have carefully cultivated bamboo groves on their grounds. And bamboo is integral to the tea ceremony, which was popularized in Kyoto beginning in the 16th century, being used in the construction of tea houses and utensils such as tea whisks and tea scoops.

Founded in 1919, Yokoyama Bamboo Products & Co. is one of many Kyoto stores that continue to maintain and preserve Kyoto's bamboo traditions. The store has worked on a number of well-known construction projects using bamboo in Japan. For example, there is a bamboo fence installed at the Katsura Imperial Villa¹, the garden of which is said to be one of Japan's finest. The scale and beauty of this bamboo fence fascinates

visitors. The store is also responsible for repairing and replacing items such as bamboo fences and roof gutters at the Konnichian, a tea house of the Urasenke school of the tea ceremony, which has been designated by the Japanese government as an Important Cultural Property.

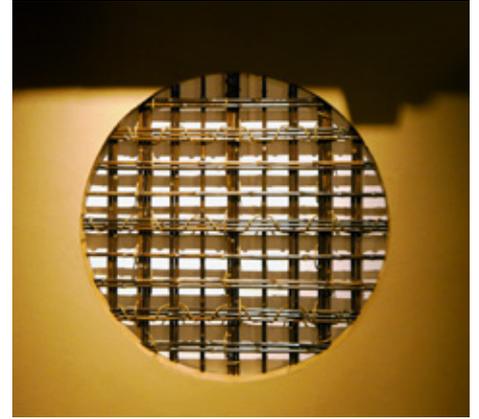
"In Kyoto, where bamboo has been used as a material for construction and tool-making in various places, there are many bamboo forests, and people have been working hard to maintain and manage them, alongside which technologies and products related to bamboo have also developed," says Yokoyama Yuki, the fourth-generation owner of Yokoyama Bamboo Products & Co. "Kyoto bamboo is supple and flexible, with a very clean surface. We grow bamboo and make a bamboo material using it called *Kyo-meichiku*."

Kyo-meichiku, a traditional handicraft of Kyoto, is made by roasting the surface of the bamboo with fire to remove its oil, and then drying it in the sun. Shiny, beautiful and durable, the material is used in everyday life, such as for Kyoto's distinctive bamboo fences called *inuyarai*, interior design materials, bamboo screens, and flower baskets. In addition to these conventional products, the store is also developing new products such as lighting fixtures, watches, cutlery, and even a stand for alcohol disinfectant using *Kyo-meichiku*. To further expand the use of bamboo as a construction material, the store developed the world's first non-combustible bamboo material, called "Yokotake flameproof bamboo," which it began developing in 2014. In Japan, the use of conventional

All photos: Courtesy of Yokoyama Bamboo Products & Co.



A restaurant ceiling fitted with *Kyo-meichiku* split bamboo



A bamboo lattice wall frame exposed as an interior design element



A bamboo lighting fixture



An *inuyarai* bamboo fence resting against the wall of a traditional townhouse in Kyoto



A bamboo fence in the Japanese garden at the Palace and Gardens of Schönbrunn, Vienna, Austria

bamboo materials for interior design has been restricted due to their flammability, but this new bamboo material can be used in places that were not possible before due to its high fire resistance, as certified by the Japanese Government (Fire and Disaster Management Agency of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications). This bamboo material, which also has the beauty of *Kyo-meichiku*, has been used for the interiors of famous apparel brand stores, restaurants, hotels, and so forth both in Japan and overseas. “Protecting Japanese bamboo culture is my mission as the successor of Yokoyama

Bamboo Products & Co.,” says Yokoyama. “The first step is to protect the old practices I’ve inherited. I believe that challenging myself to try new things based on that principle and sharing what I make will lead to the preservation of our traditions.”

Bamboo is a material that can add a Japanese-style flavor to buildings and products. Through Yokoyama’s ambitious efforts, more people will continue to discover the appeal of bamboo. **U**

ⁱ Completed in its present form in the 17th century as a villa of the Hachijonomiya family. Often said to be the pinnacle of Japanese architecture and garden design.



Some of the range of bamboo shoot dishes that feature in Kinsuitei's full course menu

Jikitake, simmered slices of bamboo shoots



Refined "Kyo" Bamboo Shoot Cuisine

Kinsuitei is a Japanese restaurant which serves unique dishes featuring bamboo shoots grown by the restaurant itself. It is situated in Nagaokakyo City, briefly Japan's capital around 1,200 years ago, in the west of present-day Kyoto Prefecture¹.

Yakitake, seared and roasted bamboo shoots



Otsukuri, thinly sliced bamboo shoot tips



Kinsuitei is situated on the shore of Hachijoga-ike Pond in Nagaokakyo City. Azaleas bloom in the bamboo shoot season

KATO KYOKO

BAMBOO shoots, or *takenoko* in Japanese, are the edible young shoots that emerge from the underground rhizomes (similar to roots) of bamboo. They are ready to eat when their tips begin to poke out of the ground in bamboo forests during spring, and are a food that heralds the arrival of the season for Japanese people. There are various popular ways to enjoy bamboo shoots, such as simmered dishes, soups, and tempura.

Bamboo shoots harvested mainly in the area around Nagaokakyo City in Kyoto Prefecture from late March to mid-May are referred to as “Kyo” (short for Kyoto) bamboo shoots and are considered a luxury foodstuff. Kinsuitei is a traditional Japanese restaurant established in 1881 on the shore of Hachijoga-ike Pond adjacent to Nagaoka Tenmangu Shrine in Nagaokakyo City and serves seasonal Kyoto cuisine. The cultivation of the bamboo shoots that feature on the restaurant’s menu is handled entirely by the restaurant itself.

“The appeal of Kyo bamboo shoots is their subtly sweet aroma and soft texture. However, their flavor only lasts for the brief period of time when the bamboo shoots are still in the ground. Exposure to light and air makes them grow rapidly and they get tougher with a stronger *egumi*ⁱⁱ taste. Their aroma also deteriorates,” says Ikeda Hisashi, the fifth-generation head of Kinsuitei. “So we locate a slight crack in the ground and dig up the young bamboo shoots before their tips emerge.”

As bamboo shoots grow, their outer

skin toughens and darkens. In contrast, the outer skin of young bamboo shoots that have not yet emerged from the earth is light brown to cream-colored and, unlike full-grown bamboo shoots, is tender and almost totally free of *egumi*. In order to harvest bamboo shoots that are of sufficiently high quality to use in cooking, bamboo forests must be tended year-round. In the Nishiyama area of Kyoto that is home to Kinsuitei, a unique traditional cultivation method has been passed down from generation to generation. This involves fertilization and pruning parent bamboo in summer, then placing straw and earth over the floor of the bamboo forest from fall through winter to create a soft layer of soil suitable for bamboo shoots to grow. This unique cultivation method is found nowhere else in Japan and is what makes Kyo bamboo shoots a luxury foodstuff.

During the bamboo shoot season, Ikeda goes to the bamboo forest early in the morning accompanied by a relative to dig up bamboo shoots. When the bamboo shoots are unearthed, they are immediately placed in boiling water and boiled for two hours. The final step in the preparation process is to soak them in cold spring water for 30 to 60 minutes. Bamboo shoots dug up in the morning are served in the restaurant the same day.

From late March through May, Kinsuitei serves a full course menu featuring bamboo shoots harvested that morning. This includes the restaurant’s signature dishes of *jikitake* and *otsukuri*, which are only served during the peak bamboo-shoot season from April to mid-May.

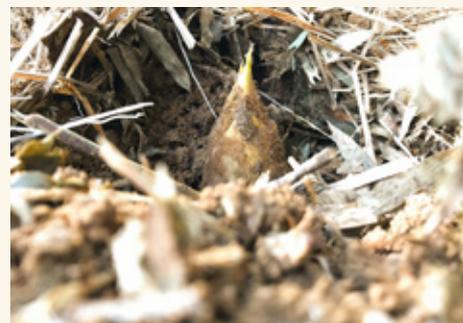
Jikitake consists of round slices of bamboo shoots cooked (simmered) in special stock, with *katsubushi* (shavings

of simmered, smoked and fermented skipjack tuna) added at the end of the cooking process. Despite the dish’s robust appearance, *jikitake* has a very soft texture and the refined flavor of Kyo bamboo shoots is quite clear. *Otsukuri* is a dish in which the tips and other particularly tender parts of bamboo shoots are sliced thinly like sashimi, then beautifully arranged in a small bowl and served with a little special stock and soy sauce.

Another dish, *yakitake*, is made by brushing bamboo shoots with a special soy-based sauce and searing them over an open flame, then wrapping them in the skin of bamboo shoots and roasting them to intensify the aroma.

Says Ikeda, “Guests who taste our Kyo bamboo shoots full course menu often say they are surprised by the softness of the bamboo shoots and their sweetly fragrant aroma.”

Kinsuitei aims to protect Kyoto’s culinary traditions alongside the bamboo forest that produces Kyo bamboo shoots for future generations. **U**



The tip of a bamboo shoot poking out of the ground



Freshly harvested bamboo shoots in the forest

i Nagaokakyo was the capital of Japan from 784 to 794, before the capital was moved to present-day Kyoto. It corresponds to the present-day Muko City, Nagaokakyo City, and Kyoto City Nishikyo Ward in Kyoto Prefecture.

ii Bitterness or unpleasant acrid taste resulting from the presence of lye in bamboo shoots and other edible wild plants.

A Sendai City shopping arcade during the Tanabata Festival
Photo: Courtesy of Sendai Tanabata Festival Support Association

The Sendai Tanabata Festival





Close-up of Sendai Tanabata Festival streamers
Photo: Courtesy of Sendai Tanabata Festival Support Association

A festival-goer wearing yukata (Japanese summer kimono) under a decoration made from origami cranes
Photo: KAZU / PIXTA

The Sendai Tanabata Festival, in which about 3,000 bamboo branches are hung with gorgeous decorations, is a festival that has been adding color to the Japanese summer for more than 400 years.

KATO KYOKO

THE Tanabata Festival, also known as the Star Festival and meaning “Evening of the Seventh,” is an event that has long been held in homes and public places in Japan. Star festivals were in fact first held as a court event in Japan, but gained widespread popularity by the early seventeenth century. The festival is held on around July 7 or August 7¹ across Japan.

In the Tanabata Festival, people write their wishes on strips of colored paper and hang them on bamboo branches in the hope their wishes reach the stars. The practice originates in a legend from ancient China that on this night, the male star Kengyusei (Altair, the head star of the constellation Aquila) and the female star Shukujosei (the α star Vega of the constellation Lyra), which are on either side of the Milky Way, have a once-a-year meeting. As the Tanabata Festival (in August) coincides with the Bon festival in which ancestral spirits are welcomed home, the two events often take place together.

The Tanabata Festival is celebrated by communities across Japan, with one of the most famous being the Sendai Tanabata Festival in Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture. Held every August 6 to 8, the festival features bamboo stems 10 meters or longer which are displayed at Sendai Station and in the surrounding shopping streets. In Sendai City, more than 3,000 Tanabata ornaments are displayed for the pleasure of residents and visitors, mostly in the numerous shopping arcades, and are gorgeously decorated with colorful washi paper streamers, paper strips, origami cranes and other ornaments. The festival is said to go back 400 years to when Date Masamune, first lord of the

Sendai Clan (1567-1636), started it to encourage interest in the arts among women and children in the area.

Yamaguchi Tetsuo, the event manager in charge of the bamboo decorations at the Sendai Tanabata Festival Support Association, which organizes the Sendai Tanabata Festival, says, “Date Masamune, who built the castle and town of Sendai in the seventeenth century, was a warlord with a deep interest in the arts. The Sendai Tanabata Festival is thought to be a strong reflection of his aesthetic sense.”

Yamaguchi adds, “Green bamboo that stretches straight to the heavens is considered sacred by Japanese people, and people in Sendai are especially fond of bamboo as it appears on the Date family crest, the Sendai Sasa.”

The bamboo used for the decorations is mainly *mosochiku* bamboo (see page 7) cut from bamboo forests on the outskirts of Sendai City especially for this festival.

The Sendai Tanabata Festival features seven main kinds of decorations. These include paper strips with wishes written on them, origami cranes for good health and longevity, drawstring purses for thrift, savings, and prosperous business, casting nets for abundant fishing catches, and streamers for improvements in weaving and handicraft skills. The streamers consist of washi paper strips about three meters long with different colorful patterns that hang from the top of the bamboo poles. They are thought to repel evil spirits, and it is customary to hang a set of five from one bamboo stem. They are beautiful to look at as they gently sway in the breeze.

Yamaguchi says, “The charm of Sendai Tanabata is the handmade decorations made of natural materials such as bamboo and washi paper. We will continue to protect this traditional event in Sendai.”

On August 8, after the festival is over, the shopping streets are filled with people taking down the decorations. Once the bamboo has fulfilled its purpose, it is recycled as business cards and postcards or reborn as bamboo charcoal under the “Sendai Tanabata Bamboo Paper Project” that began in 2012.

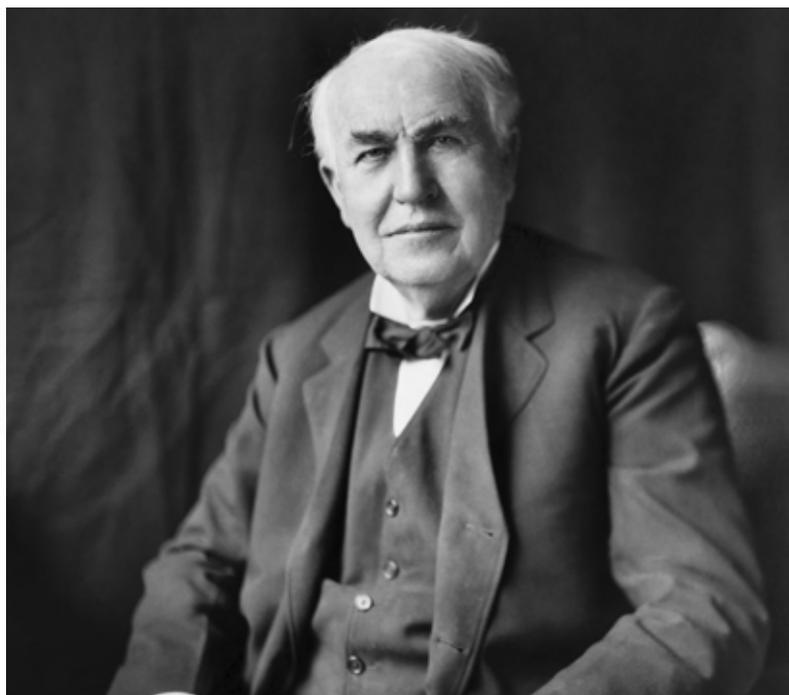
i According to the Japanese lunar calendar, July 7 corresponds to the present month of August.

Thomas Edison

The Incandescent Light Bulb and Japanese Bamboo

A species of bamboo from Kyoto Prefecture in Japan played an important role in the commercialization of the first incandescent light bulb¹, developed by the American inventor Thomas Edison (1847-1931).

SASAKI TAKASHI



Thomas Edison (1847-1931)

IN Yawata City, southern Kyoto Prefecture, there is an area that features an expanse of beautiful, well-maintained bamboo grooves. These bamboo groves form a ring around the Iwashimizu Hachimangu Shrine complex that was founded in the year 859. The high-quality native *madake* species of bamboo grows here, and is called *Hachiman-dake* (Hachiman Bamboo).

That this Hachiman bamboo played



Oikawa Yoshiki, managing director of the Japan Electric Association, holds an incandescent light bulb made from a bamboo filament

Photo: Sasaki Takashi

an important role in the practical application and global adoption of the incandescent light bulb at the end of the nineteenth century is not widely known. The American inventor Thomas Edison ultimately achieved the first practical incandescent light bulb, but initially struggled to find a suitable material to act as the light-emitting filament, a key component of the light bulb, before his search finally led to Hachiman bamboo.

“At the time, many researchers were working on the development of incandescent light bulbs, when in 1879 Edison succeeded in lighting a bulb using a filament made from carbonized cotton yarn, which he improved to allow for 40 hours continuous burning. While this brought Edison great fame, he was not satisfied, and he continued to experiment with carbonized materials, eventually testing as many as 6,000 types of material in order to make an even better filament,” explains Oikawa Yoshiki, managing director of the Japan Electric Association.

In the course of his research, Edison happened upon bamboo used in the frame of a folding fan that was in his laboratory, and when he tested it as a filament, he achieved excellent results. In response, he dispatched researchers



A replica of a light bulb using a bamboo filament
Photo: Sasaki Takashi

around the world in search of bamboo that would be suitable as a filament. In 1880, one of his researchers discovered the wild-growing Hachiman bamboo surrounding the Iwashimizu Hachimangu Shrine.

Hachiman bamboo is highly durable and flexible, with thick and sturdy fibers. What’s more, it does not burn out easily,



The monument to Edison located in the precincts of the Iwashimizu Hachimangu Shrine
Photo: Courtesy of Edison Shotokukai

and Edison was able to achieve a continuous lighting period of 1,200 hours using Hachiman bamboo as a filament. Additionally, since the distance between the nodes on the bamboo stems was just the right length, it was truly the ideal filament for which Edison had been searching.

This is how incandescent light bulbs manufactured from around 1881 using Hachiman bamboo exported from Japan became a hit product and, until a new filament was discovered in 1894, continued to brighten the lives of people around the world.

“Even in Japan, for those of us involved in electricity-related work, it is no exaggeration to describe Edison as the greatest of all time, since he made tremendous efforts to invent the incandescent light bulb and electric power supply system. To honor Edison’s achievements and pass on his passion to young people and future generations, in 1956 the Edison Shotokukai was established as a foundation to acknowledge Edison’s achievements in Japan,” says Oikawa, who also serves as managing director of the foundation.

In 1934 a first monument to Edison was placed in an area close to the Iwashimizu Hachimangu Shrine that sits in the center of the Hachiman bamboo groves that contributed to the practical utilization of



Scenes from the 2021 memorial service organized by the Edison Shotokukai
Photo: Courtesy of Edison Shotokukai



incandescent light bulbs. The monument was later moved to its current location on the southern side of the precincts in 1958. And in 1984, through the efforts of the Edison Shotokukai, the monument was rebuilt. Incidentally, the placement of this new monument in 1984 led to a friendship city relationship forming between Yawata City and the village of Milan in the US state of Ohio, the birthplace of Edison, with exchanges continuing to this day.

In addition to handling the maintenance and management of the monument, the Edison Shotokukai holds a memorial service around October 18 each year, the anniversary of Edison’s death. On this day, for remembering Edison’s great achievements, the flags of both Japan and the United States are

hoisted, US officials such as the Consul General of the United States of America in Osaka-Kobe are invited, and flowers are offered. Additionally, once every five years, a grand festival is held around the same time, and involves commemorative activities such as distributing booklets detailing Edison’s accomplishments to local elementary school students.

Today, more than 140 years since Japanese bamboo was used to produce the world’s first practical incandescent light bulb, exchanges between Japan and the United States in memory of Edison, the great inventor, are continuing uninterrupted in places connected historically to him. 7

i A light bulb that uses light from a luminous part (filament) inside a glass bulb, which is heated by passing an electric current through it.

The United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI) in Akishima City, Tokyo

Contributing to International Efforts for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders

In 2022, the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI) in Tokyo marks its 60th anniversary. UNAFEI makes a contribution to the international community's efforts to prevent crime through the provision of activities such as training courses and seminars.

SAWAJI OSAMU



An International Training Course presentation

All photos: Courtesy of UNAFEI

UNAFEI in Akishima City, Tokyo is a United Nations regional institute, established in 1962 by agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Japan. UNAFEI is the oldest institute of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme Network Institutes (PNI), a network of nineteen institutes around the world including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The Ministry of Justice of Japan is responsible for operating UNAFEI's activities. UNAFEI's main activities involve the provision of training courses and seminars for personnel in crime prevention and criminal justice administration in developing countries, with over 6,200 participants in total (as of July 2022) from 142 countries and regions having attended training courses and seminars since the Institute was established. Training courses

and seminars have also been held online since the onset of the spread of COVID-19.

INTERNATIONAL TRAINING COURSE AND INTERNATIONAL SENIOR SEMINAR

The International Training Course and International Senior Seminar are UNAFEI's two longest-running training courses and seminars. Since 1962, when UNAFEI held its first International Training Course, the Institute has continued to hold two International Training Courses each year in addition to one annual International Senior Seminar. The International Training Course in spring mainly focuses on crime prevention issues and countermeasures against various types of crime, while the International Training Course in the fall mainly focuses on the treatment of offenders. Topics in recent years include "Achieving Inclusive Societies Through Effective Criminal Justice Policies & Practices;" and "Treatment of Women Offenders."

The International Senior Seminar addresses a wide range of criminal justice issues. Topics in recent years include "Preventing Reoffending Through a Multi-stakeholder Approach," and "Prevention of Reoffending and Fostering Social Inclusion: From Policy to Good Practice."

The International Training Course and International Senior Seminar are designed for criminal justice practitioners holding relatively senior or high-ranking positions in their respective countries and each run for five weeks. Typically, there are between five and ten participants from Japan and around fifteen participants from overseas. The events consist of presentations by individual participants on the crime situation and criminal justice systems in their respective countries, lectures by Japanese and international experts and UNAFEI professors, observation visits to criminal justice agencies, group workshops, and plenary discussions.

Lilian Akinyi Otieno of Kenya's Probation and Aftercare Service expressed her appreciation in writing following her participation in the 2020 International Senior Seminar held in Japan by saying, "UNAFEI's training seminar has had a great impact on my career." As someone who works with juvenile probation officers in Kenya, she noted that she found the meeting with Volunteer Probation Officers who help rehabilitate people who have committed crimes particularly beneficial. "While in Japan, I learned a lot about the importance of professionalism," says Otieno.

OTHER TRAINING COURSES AND SEMINARS

As well as the above-mentioned International Training Courses and Seminars, since 2000, UNAFEI has held the annual International Training Course on the Criminal Justice Response to Corruption, on the topic of the legal system and its application in the prevention of corruption by government officials. Since 2007, UNAFEI has held the annual Regional Seminar on Good Governance for Southeast Asian Countries, to support efforts to establish the rule of law and good governance in Southeast Asian countries.



UNAFEI planned and managed a workshop at the 14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (the Kyoto Congress)



A Youth International Training Course group workshop

In 2021, UNAFEI held the Youth International Training Course. This formed part of the institutional response to the Kyoto Declaration adopted at the 14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (the Kyoto Congress) held in Kyoto in the same year. The second session in August 2022 was held on the topic "Towards a Society without Child Abuse: Seeking Youth-led Solutions" in a hybrid format combining in-person and online participation. The session was attended by twenty-four Japanese and non-Japanese students studying at educational institutions such as universities and graduate schools. One of the attendees, Kato Miki from the University of Toronto, says, "I learned about prevention of child abuse through this course. I hope to contribute to decreasing child abuse in the future."

In addition to the aforementioned training courses and seminars, UNAFEI provides bilateral assistance at the request of the United Nations and countries around the world. Furthermore, UNAFEI dispatches staff to the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, where it reports the results of research and holds workshops.

UNAFEI will commemorate its 60th anniversary with a ceremony and symposium on October 21, 2022. As part of this event, the public will be able to access online lectures delivered by three international experts. UNAFEI will continue to actively engage in a wide range of activities to support international efforts for crime prevention, treatment of offenders, and the advancement of criminal justice. [▶](#)

Note: This article has been created with the consent of the Ministry of Justice and on the basis of materials published by the Ministry.



Making Paper Using Bamboo

Bamboo paper is attracting attention as an effective use of bamboo when viewed from the perspective of properly managing Japan's bamboo forests. One company in Japan in particular is highly committed to the production of this bamboo paper.

SASAKI TAKASHI



100% bamboo paper notebooks



Origami (paper folding) animals of the *satoyama* countryside and “memo towers” made from bamboo paper

IN recent years, neglected bamboo forests have become a problem in Japanese farm and mountain villages. Bamboo grows quickly, with its underground stem growing by about three meters annually, thus allowing new bamboo sprouts to grow, these reaching more than ten meters in height in just two to three months. Therefore, if left unmanaged, bamboo forests will spread to surrounding thickets, depriving other plants of sunlight and causing them to wither. If this situation continues, there is even a danger of losing the beautiful landscapes and biodiversity of Japanese *satoyama*ⁱ.

Chuetsu Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd. is working to address this issue by using its own original technology. The company was founded in Takaoka City, Toyama Prefecture in 1947 and is now the only comprehensive pulp and paper manufacturer in Japan that has technology to make paper out of bamboo.

“Japan long consumed bamboo in large quantities as a material for making the frames of baskets, boxes, bamboo fences, and earthen walls, but with the spread of plastic products and changes in lifestyles, bamboo has now become almost unused,” explains Nishimura Osamu, the head of the company’s Sales Planning Department. “I believe that the sustainable use of Japanese bamboo as a resource is a matter of importance for society as a whole.”

Chuetsu Pulp & Paper started making paper using bamboo in 1996. Kagoshima Prefecture, which is the location of the Sendai Mill, one of the company’s paper mills, has the largest surface area of bamboo forest in Japan and is one of Japan’s leading producers of bamboo shootsⁱⁱ. Regional farmers regularly cut down bamboo that has been growing for a few years in order to harvest good-quality bamboo shoots, but disposing of the bamboo has been an issue. Bamboo does

i “An area consisting of farmlands, irrigation ponds, secondary forest, plantation forest, and grasslands around human settlements” (Ministry of the Environment, Japan).

ii Bamboo shoots are edible. See pp.18-19 on bamboo shoot cuisine.



Bamboo chips, the raw material for bamboo papermaking



A roll of bamboo paper

not rot easily even if it may wither, which means that it does not easily return to the soil, while burning bamboo to dispose of it is bothersome and causes environmental stress. Consequently, a bamboo shoot farmer asked the person in charge of collecting raw materials at the mill if it would like to use the cut bamboo as raw material for paper.

Chuetsu Pulp & Paper had the farmer take the bamboo to the chip factory and bought it according to its weight.

Nishimura says, “Initially, the blending ratio of the bamboo pulp was 10%, but in 2009, we started making and selling ‘bamboo paper’ from 100% domestic bamboo pulp, setting up a system for collecting up to 20,000 tons of bamboo per year.”

As part of this effort, the company went through a long process of trial and

error, such as completely rethinking the blades of the cutting machine at the chip factory to be usable with bamboo. Finally, it was able to succeed in making bamboo chips suitable for papermaking.

Bamboo paper has a supple and gentle feel, with original products such as notebooks, sticky notes, letter sets, and calendars made from it becoming very popular. Moreover, as a product that contributes to solving social issues such as that of neglected bamboo forests, bamboo paper has won numerous awards, including the “Eco-Products Grand Prize.”

Neglected bamboo forests are spreading all over the country, and the technology of making bamboo paper is expected to contribute to the protection of Japan’s *satoyama* while making effective use of bamboo. 

The Comforting Timbre of the Shakuhachi

American Bruce Huebner is a *shakuhachi* player who performs across borders and musical genres.

SATO KUMIKO and SAWAJI OSAMU

THE *shakuhachi* is a traditional Japanese end-blown flute made from bamboo. Breath is exhaled into an embouchure hole at the top of the instrument, and there are four finger holes on the front and one on the back. The sound is changed by a combination of placing or lifting the fingers over the holes and the lip angles over the embouchure hole.

“There are aluminum shakuhachi nowadays, but in the end I prefer bamboo,” says Bruce Huebner. “There is a warmth to the timbre that fits well with nature. When playing outdoors, it sounds as if the music is melting into nature.”

Bruce is from California, and he has been pouring his passion into the shakuhachi for over thirty years. Based in Japan, he has performed both as a soloist and together with musicians from a variety of genres in many countries around the world.

Both of his parents are music lovers,

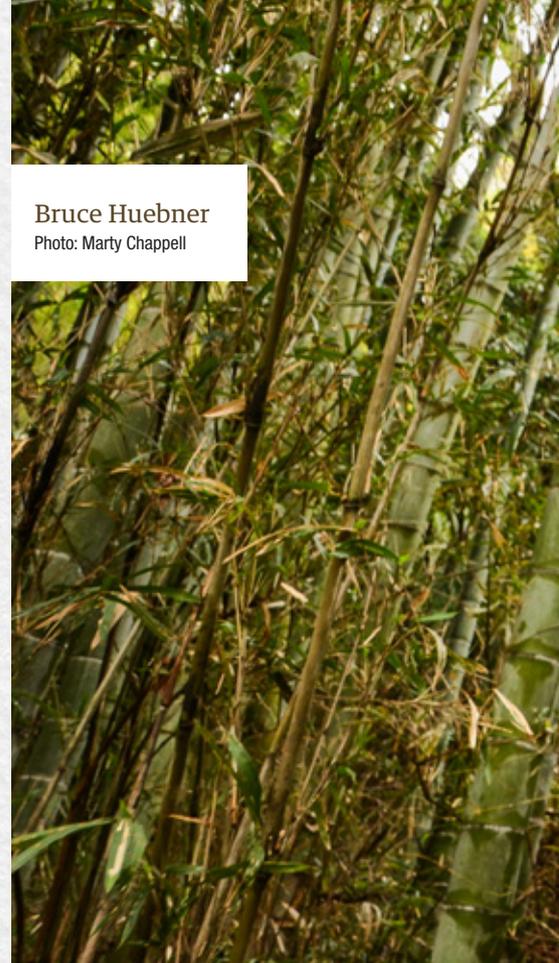


Huebner performs the classical piece “*Shiki no Nagame*” (*View of Four Seasons*) in a traditional setting with shamisen and koto

Photo: Courtesy of Bruce Huebner

and Bruce began studying the flute from age 10 and saxophone from age 14; he was especially enthusiastic about the musical genre of jazz. He first heard the sound of a shakuhachi when studying music at California State University, Northridge. By chance, he heard a performance on the radio of shakuhachi player Yamaguchi Goro (1933–1999), a holder of Important Intangible Cultural Property (commonly referred to as a Living National Treasure) and Bruce’s future teacher. Bruce was spellbound by the timbre of the shakuhachi, which was different from that of the Western music he had been familiar with since childhood. Later, he was lucky enough to hear a live performance of three Japanese traditional instruments (shakuhachi, shamisen, and koto¹) at a Los Angeles art museum, and he became even more interested in the shakuhachi and Japan. In 1983, after graduating from university, he moved to Japan and began studying the shakuhachi while attending Japanese language school.

Looking back, he says, “The shakuhachi is at first glance an instrument with a simple construction, so it looks easy to play. But I learned as soon as I picked it up that it is extremely difficult to actually produce a sound. To tell the truth I couldn’t produce a sound at all. My experiences with flute and sax were mostly



Bruce Huebner
Photo: Marty Chappell



Huebner lectures on *shakuhachi* at Meiji Gakuin University in Yokohama

Photo: Courtesy of Bruce Huebner

useless.”

A delicate technique is necessary to produce a rich sound with the shakuhachi. The timbre changes slightly based on the strength of breath, the way the finger holes are covered, the angle of the head, the movement of the throat and chin, and more. A player can produce all sorts of tones by combining these elements.

“In spite of an apparent lack of technology like keys, finger holes, embouchure plate or metal construction, the shakuhachi has tremendous potential as a tool for music making. Ironically the

¹ For the shamisen, see “Cultural Envoys,” *Highlighting Japan*, November 2021 issue: https://www.gov-online.go.jp/eng/publicity/book/hlj/html/202111/202111_12_en.html. The koto (or *so*) is an instrument with 13 strings (usually) strung over a long wooden body with moveable bridges.



unique simple construction allows the player tremendous freedom to create sounds and express emotion.”

After about three years in Japan, Bruce went back to America and earned a Master’s degree in Asian Studies from the graduate school at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Then in 1990, he came back to Japan as an international student sponsored by the Ministry of Education (now the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology), and entered the Master’s program at the Department of Traditional Japanese Music in the Music Faculty of Tokyo University of the Arts. He was the first non-Japanese student to enter the Traditional Japanese Music Master’s program at that university. There he studied under Yamaguchi Goro and completed his degree program at the top of his class in 1994.

After that, he began to perform as a professional shakuhachi player in Japan. Alongside giving traditional shakuhachi performances, he also collaborated with musicians from a variety of genres to expand the potential of the shakuhachi. In 2000, he formed Candela, a five-per-

son ensemble, together with American jazz pianist Jonathan Katz, performing not just in Japan, but at the Toronto Jazz Festival in Canada, Blue Note in New York, and more.

Candela received high praise from an American critic who said that the group “successfully incorporates the shakuhachi and combines the best of Latin, European and Japanese traditions.”

He later formed Curt & Bruce in 2008 with American koto player Curtis Patterson, presenting Japanese traditional music as well as jazz, improvisation, original music, and more in concerts in Japan and around the world.

Bruce actively performs at shrines, restaurants, parks, and places without traditional connections to shakuhachi so that even more Japanese people can come to know the beauty of the instru-

ment. He says that he is delighted when Japanese people from the audience tell him that they have rediscovered the shakuhachi after hearing him play.

Since the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011, he frequently visits the affected areas in the Tohoku region and has performed extensively at evacuation shelters, temporary housing, and other locations. Among the affected areas, Fukushima Prefecture is a beloved place to Bruce, and one which he calls his “second home,” as he lived there for about six years before the earthquake. He says that when performing local folk songs, he can hear singing voices, handclaps, and sobbing from the audience.

“The sound of the shakuhachi is medicine for the soul. It soothes the soul,” he says. “I want to keep on performing this kind of music.” 

Huebner (second from left) performs with the Candela ensemble at Joe’s Pub in New York City

Photo: Courtesy of Bruce Huebner



Kaga no Chiyo-jo

A Haiku Poet Whose Work Expressed a Deep Love of Nature

We introduce Kaga no Chiyo-jo (1703-1775), a haiku poet whose work expressed a deep love for the natural world and who may be said to have played a role pioneering international exchange through haiku.



Statue of Kaga no Chiyo-jo in her Buddhist nun robes at the Chiyo-jo Haiku Museum

SAKURAI SHIN

KAGA no Chiyo-jo (hereinafter “Chiyo-jo”) was born in 1703 in Matto, Kaga Province (present-day Hakusan City, Ishikawa Prefecture). The daughter of a scroll mounter, she grew up surrounded by her father’s collection of paintings and calligraphic works, and is said to have already been composing haiku by the age of sixⁱ.

At the age of 17, Chiyo-jo’s talent for haiku was recognized by Kagami Shiko, a disciple of haiku poet Matsuo Bashoⁱⁱ, who described her as having “an exceptional talent for haiku.” Inspired by this recognition, Chiyo-jo devoted herself to creating haiku. After a hiatus from poetry composition from her mid-30s to run the family business following the successive deaths of her parents and siblings, she returned to writing haiku with a passion from her late 40s, continuing until shortly before her death in 1775 at the age of 73. To date, some 1,900 haiku have been attributed to Chiyo-jo during her lifetime.

Yokonishi Aya, curator of the Chiyo-jo Haiku Museum in the poet’s hometown of Hakusan City, Ishikawa Prefecture, says, “Chiyo-jo’s haiku are emotional and reveal her rich sensibility and deep love of nature. Her compositions were surely influenced by the abundant natural environment of the area where she was born and raised, and by the beauty of its ever-changing seasonal landscape.”

At the age of 52, Chiyo-jo was ordained as a Buddhist nun. Says Yokonishi, “Chiyo-jo wrote, ‘I did not become a nun because I was disillusioned with the world, but because I became anxious about the rapid

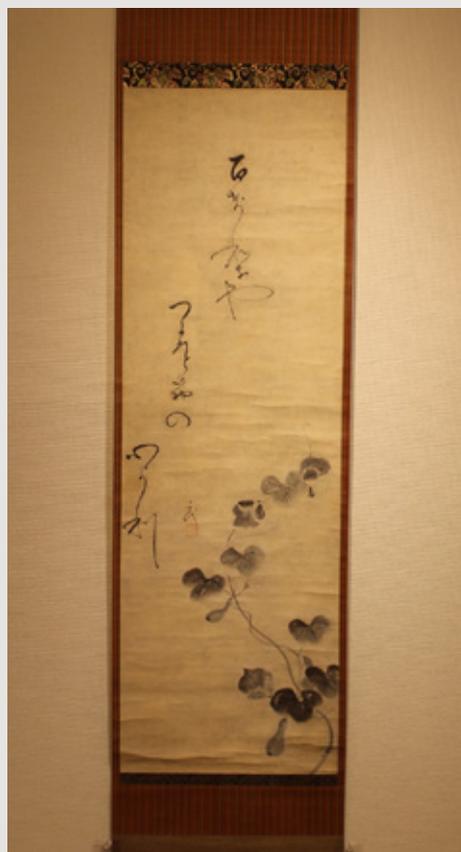


Portrait of Kaga no Chiyo-jo by Isoda Koryusai, 1773

passage of time.’ Still, Chiyo-jo continued to compose many haiku after becoming a nun. Most probably the family business was by then running smoothly, enabling her to devote herself to haiku.”

One occasion that saw Chiyo-jo become known more widely was her presentation of haiku to a Korean Delegationⁱⁱⁱ. In 1763, the 61-year-old Chiyo-jo presented haiku to a delegation of Korean envoys who came to Japan to celebrate the inauguration of Tokugawa Ieharu (1737-1786) as the Tenth Shogun.

“Chiyo-jo was ordered by the Kaga clan^{iv} to write her own haiku on six hanging scrolls and fifteen fans, and present them to the envoys. This is a very early example of Japanese haiku being introduced to a foreign country in an official setting. In short, Chiyo-jo may be said to have played a role pioneering international exchange through haiku. During



Hanging scroll featuring the haiku “A hundred gourds from the heart of one vine” and *Hundred Gourds* painting by Kaga no Chiyo-jo

the Meiji period (1868-1912), Chiyo-jo's haiku were translated and introduced abroad by the German scholar of Japanese literature Karl Florenz (1865-1939)

and the English philologist Basil Hall Chamberlain (1850-1935), and the fame of 'the poetess Chiyo-jo' spread around the world," says Yokonishi.

Chiyo-jo's rich sensibility and deep love of nature must surely have touched the hearts of both Japanese and non-Japanese alike. 

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- i Ages given are as counted in the traditional *kazoe-doshi* reckoning, in which a child is counted as one year old at birth and every January 1 after that counts as a year older.
 - ii Basho was a 17th-century haiku poet known as "Haisei" (Great Master of Haiku), which signified that he was unparalleled by any haiku poet. See *Highlighting Japan*, May 2022. https://www.gov-online.go.jp/eng/publicity/book/hlj/html/202205/202205_12_en.html
 - iii Korean Delegations were diplomatic missions sent from Korea to Japan on twelve occasions from 1603 to 1811.
 - iv One of the most powerful clans in the Edo period, ruling over the area that is now Ishikawa and Toyama Prefectures.

*asagao ya
tsurube torarete
morai mizu*

**the morning glory!
the well-bucket entangled
I ask for water**

Translation by Patricia Donegan and Ishibashi Yoshie

Chiyo-jo's most famous haiku. The year of composition is unknown, but it is thought to have been penned when she was young. The *kigo* (season word) is 'morning glory,' evoking autumn. The poem describes the following scene: "When I rose early in the morning to draw water from the well, I discovered morning glory vines entangled in the rope of the well bucket, their gorgeous flowers in bloom. I couldn't bear to cut the vines to draw water, so I got water from my neighbor instead." The poem exudes the atmosphere of the crisp early morning air and the gentleness of the beautiful morning glories.

*beni saita
kuchi mo wasururu
shimizu kana*

**rouged lips
forgotten—
clean spring water**

Translation by Patricia Donegan and Ishibashi Yoshie

Year of composition unknown. The season word is 'clean spring water,' evoking summer. The poem describes the following scene: "On a sweltering summer day, I left home with lipstick on, but it was so hot that I stopped to quench my thirst with spring water, forgetting that my lipstick would come off." The poem can be read as the delicate emotion of a woman who made the effort to apply lipstick only to have it come off with water.

*hyakunari ya
tsuru hitosuji no
kokoro yori*

**a hundred gourds
from the heart
of one vine**

Translation by Patricia Donegan and Ishibashi Yoshie

Composed at the age of around 25. The season word is 'gourd,' evoking early autumn. The verse is based on the Buddhist teaching that "all behavior of human beings arises from one heart..." – just as many gourd fruits grow from a single vine – "... and everything depends on how your heart sees things." Many of Chiyo-jo's paintings and calligraphy featuring this haiku have survived, so it is thought to have been one of her particular favorites.



Pink Yojiro (white ray)
morning glory trained
on a net



White morning
glory flowers



A blue Yojiro
morning glory
flower

Morning glory is an annual climbing plant that blooms from July to August. Known in Japan as *asagao* (literally, morning face), the plant has long been rooted in the lives of Japanese people and is familiar to them as a plant that colors the summer. Morning glory came to Japan from China in around the eighth century as a medicinal herb. The beautiful and brightly hued flowers continued to be loved, and especially from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, cultivation flourished, giving rise to many garden varieties with flowers of different colors such as blue, purple, white, red and pink. The Yojiro hybrid has a pattern of “white rays” radiating from the center of flowers in these colors. The size of the flowers is also varied, ranging from huge (over 20 cm) to small (5–6 cm).

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